



NEWS

Unemployment Rate at 3.5 Percent - Massachusetts Loses 6,100 Jobs in January

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Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development

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BOSTON, MA – BOSTON, MA – MARCH 9, 2018 – [The state's total unemployment rate remained at 3.5 percent in](#) January, the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development announced Thursday.

[The Bureau of Labor Statistics' preliminary job estimates indicate Massachusetts lost 6,100 jobs in January.](#) Over the month, the private sector lost 4,200 jobs; although gains occurred in Professional, Scientific, and Business Services; Information; and Other Services.

From January 2017 to January 2018, BLS estimates Massachusetts has added 29,000 jobs.

The January unemployment rate was six-tenths of a percentage point lower than the national rate of 4.1 percent reported by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

“Massachusetts continues to experience a low unemployment rate and labor force expansions. While the overall health of our economy remains strong, and 2017 marked the 8th consecutive year of job growth, persistent skills gaps remain. That is why our workforce development partners remain committed to ensuring that those who are still unemployed or underemployed have access to the training resources they need to access high demand jobs.” Labor and Workforce Development Secretary Rosalin Acosta said.

The labor force increased by 2,200 from 3,657,300 in December, as 3,900 more residents were employed and 1,700 fewer residents were unemployed over the month.

Over the year, the state's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased four-tenths of a percentage point from 3.9 percent in January 2017.

The state's labor force participation rate – the total number of residents 16 or older who worked or were unemployed and actively sought work in the last four weeks – remained at 65.3 percent. The labor force participation rate over the year has decreased by 0.2 percentage point compared to January 2017.

The largest private sector percentage job gains over the year were in Construction; Leisure and Hospitality; Professional, Scientific and Business Services; and Other Services.

Annual revisions to the job estimates show growth was essentially unchanged from what was previously estimated for 2016 as 55,400 jobs were added. In 2017, 44,000 jobs were added over the year. Private sector jobs were up 54,300 in 2016 and 43,700 in 2017. BLS annually updates job estimates for each state with the most up-to-date information supplied by employers.

Annual year-end revisions showed the unemployment rates were lower, ranging from one-tenth to six-tenths of a percentage point, than the previously published estimates for the months of May through November 2017. From January to March 2017, the unemployment rates were higher, ranging from three-tenths to seven-tenths of a percentage point. The labor force estimates were slightly lower than

previously published estimates from March to September 2017 and higher in January, February and the last quarter of 2017.

January 2018 Employment Overview

Professional, Scientific and Business Services gained 2,500 (+0.4%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Professional, Scientific and Business Services added 13,300 (+2.4%) jobs.

Information added 1,000 (+1.1%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Information gained 600 (+0.7%) jobs.

Other Services added 400 (+0.3%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Other Services are up 1,900 (+1.4%) jobs.

Education and Health Services lost 4,800 (-0.6%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Education and Health Services lost 200 (0.0%) jobs.

Construction lost 1,400 (-0.9%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Construction has added 7,200 (+4.8%) jobs.

Manufacturing lost 800 (-0.3%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Manufacturing added 700 (+0.3%) jobs.

Leisure and Hospitality lost 500 jobs (-0.1%) over the month. Over the year, Leisure and Hospitality added 9,900 (+2.7%) jobs.

Trade, Transportation and Utilities lost 300 (-0.1%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Trade, Transportation and Utilities lost 2,100 (-0.4%) jobs.

Financial Activities lost 300 (-0.1%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Financial Activities added 400 (+0.2%) jobs.

Government lost 1,900 (-0.4%) jobs over the month. Over the year, Government lost 2,700 (-0.6%) jobs.

Labor Force Overview

The January estimates show 3,532,300 Massachusetts residents were employed and 127,100 were unemployed, for a total labor force of 3,659,500. The unemployment rate remained at 3.5 percent over the month. The January labor force increased by 2,200 from 3,657,300 in December, as 3,900 more residents were employed and 1,700 fewer residents were unemployed over the month. The labor force participation rate, the share of working age population employed and unemployed, was 65.3 percent. The labor force was up 13,200 from the 3,646,300 January 2017 estimate, with 26,500 more residents employed and 13,300 fewer residents unemployed.

The unemployment rate is based on a monthly sample of households. The job estimates are derived from a monthly sample survey of employers. As a result, the two statistics may exhibit different monthly trends.

NOTES:

The labor force is the sum of the numbers of employed residents and those unemployed, that is residents not working but actively seeking work in the last four weeks. Estimates may not add up to the total labor force due to rounding.

Local area unemployment statistics for January 2018 will be released on Tuesday, March 13, 2018. The preliminary February 2018 and revised January 2018 unemployment rate, labor force and job estimates for Massachusetts will be released on Friday, March 23, 2018. See the [2018 Revised Media Advisory annual schedule](#) for a complete list of release dates.

Detailed labor market information is available at www.mass.gov/lmi.

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Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development →

EOLWD manages the Commonwealth's workforce development and labor departments to ensure that workers, employers, and the unemployed have the tools and training needed to succeed in the Massachusetts economy.

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